

H.R. 2264, holding OPEC accountable for oil price fixing, we call it the NOPEC Act, which was passed on May 27 of last year, with 220 Democrats voting for it, and 125 Republicans voting against it.

Cracking down on gas price gouging, H.R. 1252, passed May 23 of last year, opposed by 140 Republicans, including all of the Republican leadership, 228 Democrats voting in favor of it.

Repealing those subsidies that were given to profit-rich big oil companies. We're talking about ExxonMobil and the other big oil companies that have made the biggest profits of the history of any industry in the world. And, by the way, the five CEOs of the five biggest oil companies testified a couple of weeks ago before the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. I sat there while all five of them talked about how they couldn't help it they were making so much money. One of my colleagues from the Republican side during his 5 minutes of questioning, Representative WALDEN, said, "I'm a small businessman"—and if I can paraphrase because I don't know if this is an exact quote—"I'm a capitalist," said Representative WALDEN. "And when I had a very good year where my profit is so high that it's better than I even could have imagined, I start to ask whether I can lower the prices to my consumers."

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JACKSON of Illinois). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ARCURI. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. HALL of New York. "I start to think," said Representative WALDEN to the oil company executives, "about whether I might be able to lower the price at the pump and lower the price to my consumers. Have you ever thought about doing that, now that you're making such a big profit?"

And one by one, all five of them said, "Oh, we don't control the price at the pump."

I think that's as good a case as one needs to hear for government regulation and possible legislation to make sure that there are not excess profits or gouging going on in this current state of the economy, and especially the oil economy.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 3 minutes to the ranking member, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA).

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

It's unfortunate that we're here today to consider an important piece of legislation, our Coast Guard reauthorization, and it's also unfortunate we're discussing the rule under which that legislation will be brought to the floor, and that's a closed rule.

Unfortunately, this is the first time in at least 20 years that this Coast Guard reauthorization has been considered under a closed rule, not an open rule. I think it's particularly unfortunate that this year, when the Demo-

crat leadership has chosen to restrict debate on this important legislation that has a number of important provisions, including a provision to provide a transportation worker identification card and straighten out some of the problems we've had in trying to get a single transportation worker identification card at our ports and other facilities that we can use.

I had an amendment that would have allowed my State of Florida, and other States, a simpler method of obtaining an FBI background check on port workers than is currently available. It would also have saved port workers the cost of paying for the same background check twice.

I brought here the TWIC card. We've been waiting since 2002 for this TWIC card, Federal card. We still don't have this card. In fact, the irony of this is they allowed several amendments; one to allow any identification, there's going to be an amendment that's put in order. I can use my driver's license in the interim.

Then there's another amendment that they allowed to allow them to enroll for a TWIC card 24/7. The ironies of not allowing something to have a State, again, work with the Federal Government and even go beyond the requirements like Florida does in trying to look at the background, the criminal background of the individual. So that's been eliminated, and my opportunity to present that, from this rule and consideration of this legislation.

Also, I'm going to take great exception with this bill because of some other restrictions they put on. Bringing in liquefied natural gas. Natural gas prices are soaring. Prices are high, and this bill creates more red tape, more impediments, and actually will reduce the supply and increase the cost to the consumer out there who's trying to pay those expensive bills for energy.

So this bill does nothing for energy. And it takes a trusted port worker, transportation worker card and makes a continual farce out of the whole process, and not allowing a reasonable relationship between the State and Federal Government.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi, the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, Mr. THOMPSON.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this rule. Every day the valiant men and women of the United States Coast Guard save lives and protect the welfare of our great country. And every day the Coast Guard lives its motto and stands always ready to help those in need.

□ 1430

Since the devastating attacks of September 11, 2001, the Coast Guard has taken on the enhancement role in homeland security. Yet the President has consistently submitted budgets that fail to give the Coast Guard adequate resources to execute all its missions. Now it's our turn to help them.

The legislation to be considered today, H.R. 2830, funds the Coast Guard at \$8.4 billion, \$200 million over the President's budget. It also increases the Coast Guard in strength to 47,000 by adding 1,500 new members. The bill authorizes additional maritime security response teams to provide anti-terrorism protection for strategic shipping, high-interest vessels, and other critical infrastructure. These teams are the Coast Guard's quick response force. They can be deployed rapidly anywhere in the Nation via air, ground, or sea to respond to changing threat conditions.

H.R. 2830, Mr. Speaker, also authorizes additional K-9 detection teams to detect explosives, drugs, and smuggled persons.

Additionally, this bill authorizes the Waterway Watch program, a nationwide initiative modeled after Neighborhood Watch programs, to allow fishermen, recreational boaters, and others who work or play on American waterways to notify the Coast Guard of suspicious activities.

Since 9/11, the Coast Guard has struggled to develop much-needed port security regulations, including those mandated by the Safe Ports Act, such as long-range vessel tracking and enhanced crew member identification. H.R. 2830 address this critical gap and others by creating a dedicated assistant commandant for port and waterway security to oversee port security measures.

With respect to liquefied gas terminals, the bill requires the Coast Guard to protect and enforce the security zones around all existing LNG facilities. Admiral Allen himself has acknowledged, Mr. Speaker, to Congress that when it comes to the proliferation of LNG facilities, he doesn't have the resources necessary to fulfill the Coast Guard's port security responsibilities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. ARCURI. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. That allows, Mr. Speaker, the Coast Guard to partner with the State and local entities to protect the security zones around LNG facilities.

Last, and certainly not least, Mr. Speaker, the improvements that the bill makes in the Deepwater program. In the future, there will be contract managers at the Coast Guard that know their job and never again will the Coast Guard be in the absurd position of accepting boats that don't float.

I urge a "yes" on the rule and on the underlying bill.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan, the ranking member, Mr. EHLERS.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, as an environmentalist and a protector of our Great Lakes, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2830's ballast water management requirements and its stated goal of eliminating aquatic invasive species from our waters.